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Extra buses, including a classic 1964 Northern General Routemaster, deployed to keep people moving as schools return

The region's largest bus operator, Go North East, has deployed 56 extra buses from today to ensure there is sufficient extra capacity on its network as more schools and workers return and use the region's buses.

The extras are covering both Go North East's and some other bus operators' services and have been implemented in partnership with Local Authorities.

This week a 1964 Northern General Routemaster bus is even helping out to

provide additional peak time capacity.

Running alongside a scheduled journey with a modern and fully wheelchair accessible bus, the vintage Routemaster, once a common sight in Tyneside, is reflective of the company pulling out all the stops to get extra vehicles on the road to provide a capacity boost to services.

The return to service of the vehicle, part of the North East Bus Preservation Trust collection since 2007 and originally new to Go North East's predecessor, the Northern General Transport Company, was supported by the company last year as part of the opening of a replica Northern Bus Garage at Beamish Museum.

It was also intended to help engage with the local community and supporting communication of the company's rich local history at a number of other events planned for this year, but sadly now cancelled due to the pandemic.

Capacity on board buses is restricted to help ensure social distancing, but face coverings are also required to be worn on all public transport and are especially helpful for circumstances where social distancing cannot always be fully observed.

The deploying of these extra buses is designed to try and ensure buses can still transport everyone who needs to use them and the company is reporting very few 'bus full' instances, with extra vehicles being dispatched, or a bus already very soon behind, as soon as this occurs.

Go North East's managing director, Martijn Gilbert, said: "Our hardworking team has gone to huge efforts to make sure our buses are clean and safe for everyone to use.

"As the schools reopen and more people return to work, we know buses will get busier and that's why we've done everything possible to put extra capacity into the network.

"We'll keep this under daily review as patterns of use and any issues emerge, but we want to assure customers that we're doing all we can to pre-empt issues and are monitoring things very closely to ensure everyone can get to where they need by bus.

“There have been many fleet changes to help with this and it’s been a great opportunity to get the vintage Routemaster into service for a couple of weeks to help out with the additional capacity, whilst also raising the profile of everyone’s extra special efforts to bolster services and keep our region moving.”

To view Go North East’s latest travel advice and enhanced timetables, visit www.gonortheast.co.uk/coronavirus.

[Go North East website](#)